

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of the claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (amended) A method for detecting particles in a sample comprising; placing a fluid sample into a sedimentation container containing a first slanted solid phase, wherein the fluid sample is placed at a location above the first slanted solid phase, sedimenting particles in a sample across the first slanted solid phase to concentrate the particles;

sedimenting the particles across a second solid phase where the second solid phase contains at least one immobilized binding agent capable of binding to at least one particle in the sample,

allowing the particles to bind to the immobilized binding agent, and detecting particles bound to the immobilized binding agent on the second solid phase,

wherein the first and the second slanted solid phase is slanted with respect to a sedimentation path.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the immobilized binding agent comprises plural binding agents.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 2 wherein different binding agents are immobilized on different regions on the solid phase.

4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said sedimenting comprises centrifuging the sample.

5. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein at least part of the container contains a density gradient during sedimentation.

6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particles are cells or fragments thereof.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particles are at least one type of microorganism.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the microorganism is a virus.

9. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising adding a binding agent either to the particles in the liquid sample or to the particles bound to the solid phase.

10. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particles are stained before or after sedimentation.

Claims 11-27 (canceled).

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said first slanted solid phase does not have a binding agent immobilized thereon.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said first slanted solid phase has a different binding agent immobilized thereon from the second solid phase.

30. (amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said sedimentation path of a single particle passes through said first slanted solid phase and said second solid phase.